

ACC plans new test of fuel pipeline

By **Mary Vandeveire**

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The Arizona Corporation Commission received federal approval to test the segment of the gasoline pipeline that ruptured last summer on Tucson's West Side.

That stretch of pipe underwent testing paid for and chosen by pipeline operator Kinder Morgan after the accident on July 30. Commissioner Kristin Mayes said a second, independent test will determine whether the pipeline failed because of something systemic, such as age. Kinder Morgan's test found corrosion from the soil and stress from high pressure operations.

Peter Hormel, whose West Side home is about 200 yards from the pipeline, said he hopes this action by the state is a first step in improved oversight of the pipeline.

"It remains an industrial hazard that needs to get out of our neighborhood," said Hormel, who represents Ward 1 on Mayor Bob Walkup's citizens task force overseeing the pipeline. The group's mission is to monitor Kinder Morgan's replacement of the pipeline, installed in 1955, with new pipe.

The task force also is watching environmental re-

Pipeline forum

► Arizona Corporation Commissioner Kristin Mayes will hold a community meeting to discuss pipeline safety concerns on Feb. 4 at 3 p.m. at El Rio Neighborhood Center, 1390 W. Speedway.

mediation of areas affected by the spill and by the replacement project, including replacement of desert vegetation.

In addition, the task force is reviewing all relocation options to get the pipeline out of residential areas while keeping the community informed.

The pipeline, which carries gasoline from Tucson to Phoenix, spewed more than 16,000 gallons of gasoline during the break, dousing five homes under construction and contaminating soil in the Silvercreek Wash. The damaged homes were torn down, 4,000 tons of contaminated soil were moved off-site, and 5,000 gallons of fuel were removed from under the soil.

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